



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

October 2018

I hope that all of our members are doing well and have had an enjoyable summer. The San Marino Historical Society has had an eventful spring and summer. At our May program, Old Spanish Trails Association Director Alexander King gave a very interesting account of the Old Spanish Trail, the 19th Century route between Santa Fe and Los Angeles. His program included details about the route as well as the significance of the people who traveled it. He also talked about the Old Spanish Trails Association and the many different chapters that belong to it. We are grateful to Alex for contribution to our society that evening.

The docents continue to provide tours of the Thurnher House for visitors and groups on Sundays. Archivist Judy Carter and volunteers staff the Thurnher House on Tuesdays and welcome visitors. Call to schedule a visit. We encourage all members and the public to visit and learn more about the history of San Marino.

We are saddened to report the passing of Oskar Thurnher. Oskar was the second son of Armin (San Marino's first Park Superintendent) and Erna Thurnher. Some of you may remember Oskar and his younger brother Bertram presented a program for the San Marino Historical Society titled "Growing Up in Lacy Park" in October 2003. Oskar remained closely linked with this community for his entire life and will be deeply missed.

For the fall program, our society will provide you with what should be another fascinating program on Monday, October 22nd. The speaker will be Bill Warren and he will present "The Grand Hotels of the San Gabriel Valley."

The Thurnher House at Lacy Park is open to visitors for tours from noon until 3:00 PM on the first and third Sunday of every month and by appointment on Tuesdays.

If any member is interested in volunteering with our organization, please contact us at 626-304-9375 or info@sanmarinohistoricalsociety.org

I hope to see many of you at our next program or at the Thurnher House.

John Ryan
President

The Grapevine

Published by the San Marino Historical Society

FALL, 2018

**SAN MARINO HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PROUDLY PRESENTS**

The Grand Hotels of the San Gabriel Valley

**By
William Warren**



On Monday, October 22, at 7 pm, the Historical Society welcomes Bill Warren who will speak about the grand hotels of the San Gabriel Valley. Bill has been a reader at the Huntington Library for sixteen years where his specialty is maps. He is past president of the California Map Society and a member of the International Map Society.

"Before there was a San Marino, Southern California, and particularly the San Gabriel Valley, was attracting pleasure seekers during the winter season. They came by train, often in private cars, from their snow covered cities, looking for upscale lodging to befit their state of life. The grand hotel was invented to fulfill their dreams of sunshine and orange blossoms. Some of these palaces still exist but most have disappeared or been re-purposed over the years."

Join us in reliving the Age of Elegance existing in our own back yard as Warren looks back in time to some of these great hotels.

Monday, October 22, 7:00pm

Crowell Public Library

Barth Community Room

1890 Huntington Drive, San Marino
Public is Welcome, Admission is Free

San Marino Historical Society Executive Officers and Members of the Board 2018

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Vice-President.....	John Morris
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Treasurer.....	Bob Houston
Immediate Past President.....	Judith Carter

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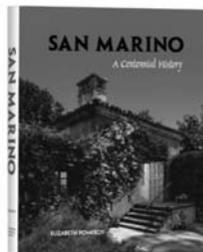
Society Presidents (1974-2015)

Midge Sherwood.....	1974
Mary Smith.....	1976
Jack Sherwood.....	1978
Ed Ford.....	1980
Graziella Almanza.....	1982
Laverne Smith.....	1985
Jeanne Imler.....	1989
Gary Fleming.....	1991
Lillian Campbell.....	1993
Marilyn Peck.....	1995
Paul Crowley.....	1999
Gene Dryden.....	2004
Benjamin Salvaty.....	2008
Ave Maria Bortz.....	2008
John Morris.....	2010
Judith Carter.....	2014

Order San Marino Centennial Book Now

\$55 per copy + 4.95 tax = \$59.95. Add \$7.50 if you wish the book to be mailed to you for a total of \$67.45.

Order on-line at:
www.sanmarinohistoricalociety.org or by stopping by the Thurnher House on the first and third Sunday from 12-3 or on Tuesdays from 9:30-3. Books are also currently available for sale at San Marino Toy and Books, Julienne, A Stitch in Time, The Old Mill, The Huntington Store, Vromans, and the Pasadena Museum of History



A Sketch of the History of San Marino on YouTube

A video presentation on the early history of San Marino was recently added to YouTube. It covers the period from time of the native populations up to 1928 and was prepared from a collection of over 80 slides from the archives of the San Marino Historical Society by Selina Du. She completed the project during her senior year at San Marino High School. Selina selected the slides with the help of Jason Carter, Assistant Archivist, and recruited a fellow student, Noah Wilson to do the narration. Using excerpts from a script written in the 1960s by a group of members of Friends of the San Marino Public Library under the direction of Dorothy Ross, the two students tailored the script it to fit the slides they selected. They were aided by Eric Sang who recorded the narration and selected the music. Rosie Burkhardt at San Marino High School Library provided the location for the recording.

For many years, volunteers took the complete slide presentation and script into the elementary schools when classes studied local history. Retired Carver School teacher Susie Anthony, who consulted on the project, remembers escorting her students to the auditorium where they gathered with other classes to listen to the illustrated talk on the history of the city.

San Marino Historical Society Archivist Judith Carter commented recently, "We hope this video will be of help to third grade teachers at Valentine and Carver Schools when they teach a unit on local history. It will also be of interest to all residents as well as a wider audience who is interested in the history of San Marino."

The slides have now taken on a new life using a more up to date technology. The seventeen minute program is available to the public and can be accessed in the classroom as well by going to youtube.com and typing in A Sketch of the History of San Marino. Perhaps this is a case of history repeating itself!

Please Sign Up!!!

If you want to receive these quarterly "Grapevines", see the old photos, learn of our programs and help to perpetuate the history of our wonderful town, please return the blue envelope quickly!

Thank you.

Thurnher House Hours

The Thurnher House is open on the first and third Sunday afternoon of each month from noon to 3:00pm. It is also open for tours by appointment. If you would like to visit the house on Tuesdays, please call 626-304-9375 or info@sanmarinohistoricalociety.org for an appointment.

Sidewalk Inscriptions Mark History's Steps by Mitchell Gould

(This article originally appeared in the Grapevine in January 1989 but it is still timely.)

When you are out walking, make note of the inscriptions in your neighborhood.

There is a custom among many contractors engaged in constructing concrete sidewalks to leave their mark pressed into the freshly poured material. Some of them imprint their names, some, the location of their headquarters, and many of them the date of construction. Their purpose is to allow pedestrians to judge the quality of the work they perform. Unintentionally, these autographs serve as a historical link with the past and stimulate a mental connection between the growth of San Marino and concurrent events in the world beyond our city's boundaries. For instance, one can read repeated impressions on the sidewalks along Sierra Madre Boulevard. On the west side of the Boulevard, it reads: J.B. Haddock 1927 Contractor.



The sidewalks on the east side weren't built until 1929. These stretches of sidewalk have stood the test of quality for about sixty years of use (editors note: now closer to 90 years) and are for the most part ready to serve for another sixty years.

The contractors who dated the marks they left have done amateur historians a great favor. 1927 and 1929 evoke images and call up memories of events of those times unconfined by the boundaries of a young San Marino.

In 1927, a youthful Charles Lindbergh in a single-engined, fixed landing-gear monoplane - the Spirit of Saint Louis - flew across the Atlantic Ocean to Paris, France. Reading that date placed there so long ago evokes a scene of a lonely plane in the vastness of sea and sky.

1929 brings back a flood of memories of a time when the world's economy was leaping from peak to peak of feverish speculation followed by market crash, bank failures and the Depression.

Somehow, the sidewalk inscriptions make these events of the past live again in our imaginations. Sidewalk construction in San Marino and world events are linked in concrete, literally.

Many dates can be found. On Monterey Road, concrete work was done in the vicinity of Banning Way by a

contractor named Williams in 1925. It would be interesting to know what the oldest date in the city might be. Unfortunately, in many areas, sidewalks and curbs were removed to permit the construction of depressed curbs and ramps for wheelchair access, and in the process contractor inscriptions were destroyed. That is the sort of thing archeologists run into frequently.



Nevertheless, there remains in existence a considerable record in concrete awaiting a systematic compilation and analysis as part of the history of where we live. The names of A.O. Nelson, Nelson and Lutzow, Robert P. Law, Bartlett & Mathews, Larson & McCarthy, Osborn, Myers and many others are engraved and give mute witness to some of the activity that helped make our city what it is today.

Remembering Oskar Rudolf Thurnher (1928-2018)

We mourn the passing of Oskar Thurnher who's family lived in the Thurnher House while his father Armin was Park Superintendent during the creation of Lacy Park. Oskar was a generous supporter of the San Marino Historical Society over the years. He was a graduate of South Pasadena/San Marino High School and served in the US Air Force in Korea. He relocated to Northern California for college and graduate school. He worked for General Electric Nuclear Power Generation Group for almost three decades. In 1980, he purchased half interest in an ambulance company and retired in 1989. In the years since, he devoted his time to the American Red Cross, the Crippled Children's Society and a number of community beautification projects.

Oskar, his brother Bert and their children visited the Thurnher House for a family celebration luncheon earlier this year. The brothers shared stories about growing up with Lacy Park as their back yard. Oskar donated his family history to the San Marino Historical Society Archives to preserve the history of the time that Lacy Park went from a lake to a park and his family's contribution to the city.

San Marino Historical Society Membership Drive Begins Now

Every household in San Marino and the San Marino Unified School District receives an issue of the Grapevine and an invitation via blue envelope to join the San Marino Historical Society. Although members can join anytime during the year, most join now. If you prefer to join via PayPal, go to sanmarinohistoricalsociety.org. Please renew your membership or join for the first time. Your support is important to the continued preservation of the history of San Marino.

If you prefer to receive the Grapevine via e-mail, indicate so on the blue envelope or the electronic version. Please print clearly. You will receive the Grapevine in electronic format during the year. Back issues are always available on the website.

San Marino Historical Society Steps into the Present

Most of our attention and activities focus on the past but we have recently taken a step into the present. We are now on Facebook! Volunteer Joyce Gatsoulis Batnij posts regularly. Check it out and learn little known facts about San Marino, view photographs, and respond to the postings. We look forward from hearing from you.

WEBSITE

Visit our website to learn more about your Society's programs and activities as well as viewing current and past issues of our newsletter – the "Grapevine":

<http://sanmarinohistoricalsociety.org/>

Michael White Book

The Story of Michael White a California Rebel Pioneer 1801-1885 by Dorothy Jenkins Ross is a fascinating story which provides a unique view of the San Gabriel Valley's development during this notable period in California history. The book may be purchased at the Crowell Public Library, San Marino Toy and Books or by contacting the San Marino Historical Society. The price of the book is \$27.20 for a hardcover copy including sales tax and \$19.57 for soft cover.



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The "Nixon" Chair and Richard Nixon's Rumored Visit to San Marino

One day last year Mitch Lehman of the San Marino Tribune asked if he could bring by a chair to donate to the San Marino Historical Society. He said the chair came from the offices of the old San Marino Tribune building on Huntington Drive. The owner of the Tribune before the Salters, Cliff Smith and Frank and Dorothy Rice, was Herb McCormick. The story is that Richard Nixon stopped by the Tribune to speak to McCormick and sat in the chair. We have no way of proving it but it is possible.

Julie Fedde, a long time volunteer in the archives, did a little research about the chair. She found that it was made by the Marble & Shattuck Chair Company, Bedford Ohio. The designation on the bottom of the chair is M15, No. 11, 2003 WAL. An internet search revealed that the captains chair was made between 1885-1894.

Another Nixon story with a connection to San Marino is that a group of men invited Richard Nixon to meet with them at a house on Palmas Drive just after he left the U.S. Navy. The men gathered to convince Nixon to run for office. They must have been successful. Among the archives is a campaign poster. Please contact the Historical Society to help verify this meeting.



Calendar of Events

- October 22 Monday 7.p.m., "Grand Dame Hotels of the Gilded Age" by Bill Warren, San Marino Historical Society Program Presentation, Crowell Public Library, Barth Community Room, 1890 Huntington Drive, San Marino,
- February 25 Monday 7 p.m. San Marino Historical Society Program Presentation, Crowell Public Library, Barth Community Room, 1890 Huntington Drive, San Marino,